

BOROUGH OF LOUGHBOROUGH.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year ending 31st
December, 1894.

To the Council acting as the Urban Sanitary Authority for the Borough of
Loughborough.

GENTLEMEN,

The health of the Borough has been exceptionally good during the year 1894.

I have much pleasure in reporting that the death rate of this year is the lowest for an entire year which has ever been recorded in Loughborough.

The Zymotic death-rate is also the lowest of which I can find any record.

The greater healthiness of the town is also indicated by the diminished number of cases of infectious sickness notified during the year; these are less than one-third of the number notified in 1893.

MORTALITY.

The total number of deaths registered during the year was 317, but 11 of these deaths were of persons not belonging to the Borough, who died at the Hospital and Workhouse. After deducting these we get the corrected mortality, which is 306, or a death rate of 15·9 per thousand of the population, which is 3 per 1000 below the average death rate of the last six years.

The total number of deaths from Zymotic diseases was 29. This is a Zymotic death rate of 1·5, which is only about half the average of the last six years.

The Zymotic deaths were as follows. Diarrhœa, 17; Whooping Cough, 9; Erysipelas, 1; Puerperal Fever, 1; Croup, 1.

BIRTHS.

The total number of births registered was 586. This is an annual birth rate of 30·4 per thousand of the population, which is about 1 per thousand below the average

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFICATION.

126 cases of infectious diseases were notified during the year, against 471 in 1893. They were as follows :—

Small-pox	..	0	as against	4	in 1893.
Scarlet Fever	..	92	„	400	„
Diphtheria	...	2	„	3	„
Croup ...	...	0	„	3	„
Typhoid Fever	...	6	„	15	„
Puerperal Fever	...	6	„	6	„
Erysipelas	...	20	„	40	„

SMALL-POX.

The town was quite free from this disease during the year. On June 4th a tramp named John Bailey slept in the "Casual" department of the workhouse; he went on to Leicester next day, where he was found suffering from small-pox. The casual wards were forthwith disinfected at my suggestion.

SCARLET FEVER.

There were 30 cases of this disease in an infectious condition in the Borough at the beginning of the year. The number of fresh cases steadily decreased to the end of November, when the town was to all appearances quite free from infectious disease; however, a mild case or two of scarlet fever must have remained unnoticed, for during the month of December eight fresh cases of scarlet fever were notified. They were all of a mild type, and are now convalescent. Strict isolation was carried out in each case. There was no death from this disease.

DIPHTHERIA.

Only two cases of this disease were notified, as against three in 1893, 11 in 1892, and 22 in 1891. This steady diminution in the amount of diphtheria points to an improved sanitary condition of the town.

CROUP.

This fatal complaint is closely allied to diphtheria. I am glad to be able to report that the town was quite free from it during the year.

TYPHOID FEVER.

Six cases of this disease were notified. This, like diphtheria, is essentially a filth disease, and it is very satisfactory to notice how the number of cases has steadily diminished since 1890, when the Notification Act came into operation, and since which time only we have had accurate information of the number of cases which have occurred.

In that year, 1890, from the 1st of March to the end of the year, 20 cases were reported; in 1891, the number fell to 14; in 1892, still lower, to eight; in 1893 there were 15 cases notified, eight of which were imported from Stamford, leaving only seven for Loughborough; and this year, as I have stated above, the number is reduced to six, and of these, two were imported from Leicester, one to the workhouse and one to Granville Street. Of the four cases which originated in Loughborough, one was attributed to a filthy midden, one to a broken pan-closet, one to impure drinking water, and for the fourth there was no visible cause. In each case insanitary conditions found existing were reported to the Highway and Sanitary Committee, and orders made for remedying the same.

The cases were carefully isolated, and instructions given on the use of disinfectants, &c. There was no spread from any of them, and all of them recovered satisfactorily.

PUERPERAL FEVER.

Six cases of this disease occurred during the year, but all of them recovered except one. They were promptly notified, and the attendants were cautioned to abstain from attending other confinement cases for a reasonable period, consequently there was no sequence of cases this year. Each of these cases seems to have arisen independently.

MEASLES.

The town has been free from this disorder during 1894. There was rather a serious epidemic at Wymeswold in the Autumn, and a few cases occurred at Cotes, and as I was apprehensive that the infection might reach the schools in the town, I recommended the teachers of the infant schools to exclude children suffering from the first symptoms of measles, which are the same as those of a common cold, namely, sneezing and running at the eyes and nose. This was done simply as a precautionary measure.

ERYSIPELAS.

Twenty cases of this disease occurred during the year, against 40 in 1893. One death was due to this cause. I see no advantage in the inclusion of this disease in the list of notifiable ones.

WHOOPIG COUGH.

This disorder seems to be endemic in Loughborough. The town has not been entirely free from it since I have been Medical Officer of Health. I do not think it has any relation to sanitation. It often proves fatal to infants under one year. Nine deaths were registered during the year as due to this cause. Children suffering from this disorder, or coming from houses where it exists, are not allowed to attend school.

DIARRHOEA.

There is a satisfactory diminution in the number of deaths from diarrhoea, 17 having been registered, against 39 in 1893. The cooler weather which existed throughout the summer was not so productive of diarrhoea as the hot summer of 1893. Still the number of deaths this year is well up to the average, and indicates the advisability of perseverance in the course hitherto adopted by this Authority of taking such steps as will prevent soakage of filth into the earth.

The more I study this subject the more I become convinced that the principal cause of infantile diarrhoea is the inhalation by infants of gases, exhaled from the filth saturated surface soil of towns in warm weather. Improper food, no doubt, has much to do with it, but it is remarkable how year after year this mortality occurs in the hot months, with scarcely a death from the end of October to the beginning or middle of June. In the rural districts surrounding this town there is scarcely any diarrhoea. In my annual reports of 1890 and 1893 I have gone at length into this subject.

WATER SUPPLY.

The supply of water to the Borough by the Corporation Waterworks has been abundant in quantity, even this season of great scarcity of water, and the manner in which the Water Committee husbanded the supply during the long drought, without any appreciable inconvenience to the inhabitants, deserves the highest commendation.

The water is usually of a very high standard of purity. I periodically make analyses of it, because every water supply is liable to vary in quality according to the rainfall and the condition of the surface from which it is collected. During August and September the quality of the water as indicated by analysis gradually deteriorated, but it never showed any evidence of dangerous pollution. I recommended that a systematic inspection of both Blackbrook and Woodbrook watersheds be made by a competent person. This inspection was made, and seven samples of water were taken at different points in the brooks. I made analyses of these samples; the results were strikingly various, and two samples showed evidence of great organic pollution.

His Worship the Mayor, the Chairman of the Water Committee, the Town Clerk, Borough Surveyor and myself made an inspection of a large portion of the watersheds, and found several possible sources of contamination of the brooks. I am of opinion that it is very desirable that periodical inspections of the watershed should be made. The analysis of the water which I made at the end of the year shows that it has regained its usual standard of purity.

There are still instances in the town where the water supply is derived from pumps. Nine samples of suspected water from such pumps were submitted to me for analysis by the Inspector. Seven of these samples were condemned and two passed.

SCAVENGING.

Since the beginning of the year, the Corporation have themselves had the Scavenging done, instead of as heretofore by a Contractor.

The emptying of the pans as it is done now is not at all satisfactory; the closet pan is simply emptied into the cart and put back into the frame without any cleansing whatever. The consequence is that they smell just as bad after being emptied as before.

If the pan system is to be adopted, it must be reduced to a *system*, that is to say, there must be two pans for each closet, the carts must be specially constructed for carrying pans, and start full with empty cleansed pans; then as a full pan is taken away bodily, not emptied until the place of disposal is reached, it is replaced by a clean empty one.

Then the pans for dry house refuse are frequently left in the open, so that in rainy weather they are half full of water. They ought always to be placed under cover.

There is another point I ought to mention in connection with dry house refuse, and that is, that householders should consume such house refuse as paper, rags, fish bones, cabbage leaves, potato peelings, &c, by burning them in the kitchen fire. In fact there ought to be little except ashes and night-soil to remove.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

As you are aware, satisfactory progress has been made during the year with the new sewage disposal works, and it is expected that in a few months, that a complete system of sewage disposal, as well as an efficient destructor will be in full operation. I hope this Corporation will see its way to adding a steam disinfecter to its list of apparatus.

MISCELLANEOUS.

I have made several visits to workshops where women and children are employed, and found the bye laws fairly carried out. I have also made visits to tailoring and other workshops, from which wearing apparel in course of construction is taken to the operatives' home, and compared the list of operatives' names and addresses with my infectious diseases register. I found that care was taken not to send such garments to homes where there was illness. I have also visited slaughter houses, common lodging houses, factories and workshops, to see that the regulations with regard to sanitary matters were observed.

I have alone, and accompanied by the Inspector, made periodical visits to the fish and meat market. Two lots of unwholesome food, namely—unsound fish, were seized and condemned. Legal proceedings were instituted and convictions obtained.

I have also with the Inspector made inspections of overcrowded families, dirty houses, houses unfit for human habitation, &c.

From the Inspector's report will be seen details of the sanitary work done during the year.

The health of the town, and its general sanitary condition at the end of the year was very good, as with the exception of eight mild cases of scarlet fever, it was quite free from infectious disease.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS CORCORAN,

Medical Officer of Health.

25, Victoria Street, Loughborough.

26th January, 1895.

TABULATED STATISTICS APPENDED TO THE REPORT.

Population (Census 1891), ... 18,196.

Mortality from all causes at subjoined ages : at all ages, 317 ; under one year, 107 ; one and under five, 28 ; five and under fifteen, 13 ; fifteen and under twenty-five, 13 ; twenty-five and under sixty-five, 83 ; sixty-five and upwards, 73. Number of persons who died at Workhouse or Hospital, not belonging to the Borough but included in the above figures, 11.

Mortality from subjoined causes under five years :—Membranous croup, 1 ; whooping cough, 9 ; diarrhoea, 16 ; phthisis, 1 ; bronchitis, pneumonia, and plenrisy, 42 ; injuries, 2 ; all other diseases, 64. Five years and upwards :—Puerperal fever, 1 ; erysipelas, 1 ; diarrhoea, 1 ; phthisis, 14 ; bronchitis, pneumonia, and pleurisy, 20 ; heart disease, 30 ; injuries, 15 ; all other diseases, 100

Borough of Loughborough Urban Sanitary Authority.

Annual Report for year ending December 31st, 1894, of the Sanitary
Inspector W. P. CLARIDGE.

ACCUMULATIONS REMOVED OR NUISANCES ABATED ON RECOMMENDATION, OR BY INFORMAL NOTICES SERVED BY SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Defective Drainage remedied	...	...	...	...	...	16
Dirty Houses cleaned	...	...	...	...	...	14
Aeeumulations of Manure, &c. ...	...	...	...	...	...	15
Privies reconstructed and pans substituted	...	...	...	...	...	9

DESCRIPTION OF NUISANCES REPORTED TO SANITARY AUTHORITY, AND ORDERS RECEIVED FROM SANITARY AUTHORITY TO ABATE THE SAME.

Dirty Animals kept to be a nuisance	...	...	...	...	...	2
Overcrowding and Filthy Houses	...	...	...	...	...	78
Defective Drainage and Sinks not properly trapped	...	...	...	...	...	20
Insufficient Privy Aeeommodation or Defective Construction	...	...	...	...	...	30
Smoke Nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	8
Aeeumulation of Manure	...	...	...	...	...	2
Street Obstructions	...	...	...	...	...	14
Unwholesome Food condemned and seized	...	...	...	...	...	2
Pareels of Fish or Meat sent out of Market but not seized	...	...	...	...	...	2
Number of Privies and Ashpits emptied during the year	...	...	...	...	...	1741
Pans and Dry Ash Tubs emptied weekly	...	...	...	...	...

